

BOOK REVIEW

WILLOW ZUCHOWSKI. 2007. **Tropical Plants of Costa Rica: A Guide to Native and Exotic Flora.** (ISBN 978-0-8014-7374-6, pbk.). Cornell University Press, Sage House, 512 East State Street, Ithaca, NY, 14850, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.cornellpress.cornell.edu). \$35.00, 532 pp., 540 color photographs, 2 maps, 56 line drawings, 114 halftones, 6" × 9".

This vibrant and informative guide to the native and exotic plants of Costa Rica is an excellent resource for anyone traveling to Costa Rica or with a general interest in tropical plants. With descriptive species accounts, wonderful color photographs contributed by photographer Turid Forsyth, and illustrations for 430 of the more common and conspicuous plants found in Costa Rica, the author certainly fulfills her goal to create a guide that is both useful and yet small enough to carry and utilize in the field.

One of the highlights of this guide is its organizational structure. Perfect for the lay person or first-time visitor to Costa Rica, species accounts in the guide are organized by the general settings within which a traveler might encounter the plants. Each chapter of the book includes species accounts based upon these general settings as evidenced by the chapter titles: Painted Treetops, Other Common Trees, Roadside and Garden Ornaments, Fruits and Crops, Living Fences and Reforestation, Special Habitats, Typical Tropical Groups, and Conspicuous Grasses. Individual species accounts include the following components: scientific and common names (in both Spanish and English), other common names, family name to which the species belongs, physical description, flowering/fruitletting conditions, distribution, identification of related species, and comments. The comments component of the species accounts relay fascinating information on the natural history, uses (commercial, medicinal, and others), and unique characteristics of each species.

Sidebars presented throughout the guide provide additional information on a variety of botanical and ecological topics and include such titles as "Sex Life of Figs and Fig Wasps," "The Largest Flower in Costa Rica," "Where does Chan come from?," and "Drift Seeds" to name just a few. To assist readers in utilizing the guide, the author has also included an extensive glossary with illustrations, as well as a list of species by family, a complete bibliography, and an index with both scientific and common names.—Melinda McCoy, *Herbarium Volunteer, Botanical Research Institute of Texas, Fort Worth, Texas 76102-4060, U.S.A.*

BOOK NOTICES

Two Books on Florida Plants

RICHARD P. WUNDERLIN and BRUCE F. HANSEN. 2003. **Guide to the Vascular Plants of Florida (ed. 2).** (ISBN 0-81302632-6; hbk.). Univ. Press of Florida, Gainesville. University Press of Florida, 15 Northwest 15th Street, Gainesville, FL 32611-2079, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.upf.com, 352-392-1351, 352-392-7302 fax, 1-800-226-3822). \$39.95, 787 pp., 6" × 9".

We've all been using the book for several years, but this review copy perhaps reminds botanists that it's still for sale. It is "a means to identify the more than 4100 taxa of ferns, fern allies, and seed plants that are native or naturalized in Florida. It serves as the field guide and companion to the multivolume Flora of Florida (Wunderlin & Hansen 2000 and in progress)."

C. RITCHIE BELL and BRYAN J. TAYLOR. 1982. **Florida Wild Flowers and Roadside Plants (3rd printing, 1998).** (ISBN 0-9608688-3-6, pbk.). Laurel Hill Press, 5000 Walnut Cove Rd., Chapel Hill, NC 27516-8168, U.S.A. (**Orders:** www.laurelhillpress.com, 919-942-9533, 919-942-9533 fax). \$19.95, numerous color photos, map, 5 1/2" × 8 1/2".

500 species are illustrated by a color photo. For each, there is a brief diagnostic description, comments on habitat and distribution, and a dot map (with the state divided into quarters). Useful book and a great bargain.